

Ben Franklin Elementary School

Where all students feel safe, welcome, and valued!



Student and Caretaker Handbook 2021-2022

Please Note:

Some procedures and processes may
changed based on guidelines from
the health department or state
mandates

Dear Parents/Guardians,

On behalf of the entire staff at Ben Franklin Elementary School, allow me to take this opportunity to welcome you to a new school year! This handbook is intended to assist you in your orientation to Ben Franklin Elementary School and to answer some of the most frequently asked questions about our school. Since the pandemic, there are still many changes happening. Each update from the state or the local health department requires changes to policy and procedure. We will do our best to keep you updated.

The Ben Franklin Elementary School community is committed to meeting the needs of our youngest learners by providing learning experiences that will start all children on the path to achievement. In doing so, it is our goal to ensure we are providing an appropriately challenging academic environment while purposely considering social-emotional learning that is equally important. At Ben Franklin, we believe that social, emotional, and academic growth in a strong and safe school community is paramount for optimal student learning.

Parent involvement at Ben Franklin Elementary School is welcomed and an important part of our school's culture. All of our students enjoy and benefit from enhanced programs provided by the PTO and this is a direct result of the dedication of our PTO volunteers. I encourage you to become a member and active participant in our PTO.

Please do not hesitate to contact us directly with any additional questions that you may have. I am looking forward to a successful school year!

Sincerely,

Jay Billy
Principal of Awesome!

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NOTE: The information in this handbook is subject to change due to changes or revisions to district policies and/or state code that may occur during the school year. The most current version of this handbook can be found online.

Lawrence Township Public Schools

Board of Education

Patricia Hedricks Farmer, President
Michele Bowes
Pepper Evans
Dr. Michelle King

Kevin Van Hise, Esq., Vice President
Jo Ann Groeger
Gregory Johnson, Esq.
Robert Pluta
Amanda Santos

Central Office Administration

Dr. Ross Kasun, Superintendent
Dr. Andrew Zuckerman, Director of Instructional Services
Mr. Clifton Thompson, Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
Mr. Sean Fry, Director of Personnel
Dr. Linda Mithaug, Director of Student Services
Mr. Thomas Eldridge, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Ben Franklin Elementary School

Contact Information

Main Office

Ben Franklin Elementary School
2939 Princeton Pike
Lawrenceville, New Jersey 08648
(609) 671-5540 (phone)
(609) 671-3441 (fax)

Jay Billy, Principal
jbilly@ltps.org

Visit our school website at <http://www.ltps.org/BenFranklin.cfm?subpage=5920>

Follow us on Facebook by clicking [here](#) or Twitter at @bfes_ltps

Remind.com text @benfran to 81010 to receive text messages

Mrs. Donna Delgado, Secretary
Mrs. Lori Tennant, Assistant

ddelgado@ltps.org , x5541
ltennant@ltps.org , x5544

Health Office

Mrs. Cynthia Brennan, RN, CSN
609-671-5540, Option 3 (phone)

cbrennan@ltps.org

Anti-Bullying Contact Information

Ms. Destiny Cherry
School Anti-Bullying Specialist
Ben Franklin Elementary School
2939 Princeton Pike
Lawrenceville, New Jersey 08648
(609) 671-5540 (phone)
decherry@ltps.org

Ms. Melanie Fillmyer
District Anti-Bullying Coordinator
(609) 671-5458 (phone)
Mfillmyer@ltps.org

School Counseling/Guidance Office

Mrs. Corrine Rutt

dcherry@ltps.org

Student Services Office

Mrs. Rebecca Guenther, Supervisor of Special Education/CST PreK-6 rguenther@ltps.org

Child Study Team

Dr. Jen Mahler, Psychologist
Ms. Abigail Povell, LDT/C

jmahler@ltps.org

apovell@ltps.org

Curriculum Supervisors

Mrs. Maureen Hayes
Supervisor of Language Arts, Social Studies, & World
Languages K-6

mhayes@ltps.org

(609) 671-5455

Mrs. Kristin Burke
Supervisor of Mathematics and Science K-6

kburke@ltps.org

(609) 671-5457

Mrs. Rebecca Guenther
Supervisor of Special Education

rguenther@ltps.org

(609)671-5423

Faculty and Staff

Preschool

Mrs. Amanda DiCuio
Mrs. Danae Pesce
Mrs. Kim Vinch

Multi-Grade

Ms. Brittney Earle
Mrs. Michelle Basmagy
Ms. Lorin Taglairino

Second Grade

Ms. Brittney Idland
Mr. Nicholas Brackett
Ms. Hillary Hargraves-Dix
Mr. Dan Rude
Mrs. Marisol Gutierrez

Specialists

Mr. Kenneth Eiker, ASI
Rachel Burke, Resource
Mrs. Beth Hopkins, Resource
Mr. Brandon Knighton, Tech
Mrs. Patti Livecchi, Speech
Kristina Cairns, Speech
Karen O'Brien, OT
Mrs. Sharon Mark, PT
Mrs. Jessica Deak, ASI/House
Leader
Mr. Peter Braynor, Academic
Support
Mrs. Julie Schmidt, G&T
Amy Reif, Academic Support
Ms. Nichole Tunnard, Speech
Ms. Joelle Weidenbaum, OT
Mrs. Colleen Schantzer,
Academic Support
Ms. Leah Urizar, ESL
Ms. Ellen Maniloff - Behav. Spec.

Kindergarten

Mrs. Kim O'Boyle
Mrs. Jo Fredericks
Mrs. Terri Krisak
Mrs. Melissa Pacuta
Mrs. Angela Halbruner

Third Grade

Mr. Peter Wilson
Mrs. Erika Smoots
Mrs. Meg Leventhal
Ms. Sarah Sutton
Ms. Rebecca Culpepper
Ms. Stephany Rumrill

First Grade

Mrs. Sadhwvi Ali/Stacy
Donohue/Ms. Klaudia Grzesiak
Mrs. Kimberly Menchu
Ms. Kathryn Cole
Ms. Elizabeth Seipp

Related Arts

Mrs. Carlee Cimorelli,
Health/PE
Mrs. Jennifer Skorupa, Art
Mrs. Wendy Offery, Library
Mrs. Colleen LaFlamme, Music
Mr. James Yates, Health/PE

Student Services

Dr. Jen Mahler, Psychologist
Ms. Abigail Povell, LDT/C
Mrs. Cynthia Brennan, RN CSN
Ms. Destiny Cherry, School
Counselor

Custodians

Mr. Gerald Altema, Head
Custodian
Mr. Joe Oschmyanec, Head Night
Custodians
Mr. Teddy Warrick
Mr. Frantz Elysee

Cafeteria

Ms. Laura Allen
Ms. Frareeha Nadeem

School Hours and Schedule

School Hours

Kindergarten – Third Grade School Hours		
	Drop Off	School Day
Full Day	8:15 am – 8:45 am	8:45 am – 3:20 pm
2 Hour Delay	10:15 am - 10:45 am	10:45 am – 3:20 pm
Early Dismissal	8:15 am – 8:45 am	8:45 am – 1:15 pm

Preschool School Hours	
	School Day
Full Day	9:30 am – 3:20 pm
2 Hour Delay	11:30 am - 3:20 pm
Early Dismissal	9:30 am – 1:15 pm

Delayed Openings and Emergency Closings

In the event of inclement weather, hazardous road conditions, or any other emergencies requiring us to close schools, the district website will be updated to notify families. Phone messages and emails from the district will be used as well. QuickNews (via link on our website) will also be updated. If you do not have internet access, you can call the school closing number at (609) 671- 5590 or listen to:

Radio

WPST (94.5 FM)
WKXW (101.5 FM)

Television

NBC Channel 10
WPVI TV6 Channel 6
WNYW Fox 5 Channel 5

District’s Comcast Channel 19
(digital 118-1) and Verizon
Channel 37

During an emergency closing, students’ dismissal plans often change due to cancellations of after school activities, availability of parents/guardians, etc. If your child’s dismissal plan changes due to an emergency closing, please call the main office at (609) 671-5540 as early as possible. Please do not rely on sending an email to your child’s teacher for this communication.

Plan now for how your family will respond to delayed openings and emergency closings. There should always be a backup plan that students can follow, and parents/guardians should discuss this with students periodically throughout the school year. *Having a plan in place in advance ensures the safety of all students and staff during an emergency.*

Lunch is still served on days where the school is on a delayed opening or early dismissal.

Attendance

Attendance Policy

In accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:38-25, Board Policy 5200, every parent, guardian, or other person having control and custody of a child between the ages of six and sixteen shall cause the child to regularly attend school. The Board of Education requires students enrolled in the school district attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the State.

The curriculum for students enrolled in the Lawrence Township Public Schools is designed to achieve certain educational goals within the number of school days provided by our resources. Maximum attendance is a prescribed condition upon which all courses of study are predicated. Students are expected to attend school daily when schools are in session. Regular attendance improves the opportunity for optimal student learning.

Students who accumulate unexcused absences totaling 18 days may not be promoted or advanced to the next grade level.

Each absence must be documented within three day of the student's return to school by a written note from the student's parent or guardian or a doctor's note or similar documentary proof. For more details on excused and unexcused absences and other details related to attendance, please review the district's attendance policy and regulations on the district's website under the Board of Education policies section (5200 Attendance) or click [here](#) and [here](#)

To Report Your Child Absent

Prior to 9:00 am the day of an absence

- Please call the school at 609-671-5464
- In your message, please include:
 - Your child's first and last name
 - Your child's teacher's name
 - The date of the absence
 - The reason for the absence

After 9:00 am the day of an absence

- Please call the school at 609-671-5541
- If you need to leave a message, please include the same information as mentioned on the left.

The school's automated phone message will be sent to families if their child is absent and they did not contact the school or they contacted the school but did not leave a reason for the child's absence. Using this phone message allows our main office and health office staff to better serve students and families while ensuring each family is informed of their child's absences. If you receive this phone message in the future, please return the call to assist the school in accurately recording your child's absence

If you send an email to your child's teacher about an absence, it is important to still call the school using the procedures above.

Documentation of the nature and causes of all absences shall be the responsibility of the parent/guardian. For anticipated absences, the parent/guardian shall provide advance notice to the school prior to the scheduled absence. For unanticipated absences, the parent/guardian must notify the school early in the school day of the absence and the reason therefore. For excused absences, documentation from a physician must be provided within three days of the student's return to school by a written note. Failure to provide such documentation within the three day period shall result in the absence being considered unexcused.

Days absent due to vacations or other family trips shall be counted as unexcused absences. Teaching staff members are not required to provide outlines, homework assignments, or related study materials in advance or in anticipation of such trips. Regular breaks are built into the school calendar. It is strongly recommended that families plan vacations during these times to avoid interruption to their child's learning. If a vacation extends for 10 days or more, we request that you withdraw your child from school and re-enroll him/her upon your return. The school secretary will provide you with the appropriate withdrawal paperwork.

To Check Your Child's Absences

You can call the main office at (609) 671-5540 to check the number of absences your child has but that information is also in Genesis.

Making Up Work Following an Absence

Upon a student's return to school, a student's classroom teacher will arrange for making up missed assignments and assessments with the student and his/her parent(s). Assessments will be made up during the school day. Missed assignments may be made up during the school day if possible and as part of homework as needed.

Late Arrival to School

A student arriving after **8:45 am** for any school session is required to report directly to the school office with a parent/guardian. The habit of punctuality should be encouraged. Students may not report directly to the classroom without first being signed in. Students arriving after this time will be marked as tardy (except if lateness is related to busing or preschool which starts at 9:30 am).

Early Dismissal from School

Parents are encouraged to schedule appointments after school hours. However, personal circumstances may arise requiring a student to be released early from school. To ensure the smooth and safe handling of such situations, parents must send a note that includes:

- Date
- Name of student
- Reason for the early dismissal (i.e. doctor/dentist appointment- doctor's/dentist's name, appointment time, and telephone number, etc.)
- A telephone number where the parents may be reached during the school day

A parent picking a student up early should come to the main office, and a staff member will call the classroom to have your child come. The parent/guardian will sign-out the student. Students returning to school after signing out earlier in the day must re-enter via the main office and sign back in.

If someone other than the parent or guardian is to meet the student, a note is required indicating the person has parent/guardian permission to pick up that particular child. This person should also be ready to present a photoID upon arrival at Ben Franklin.

Busing

Transportation Department

Susan Olman, Supervisor of Transportation
(609) 671-5445 solman@ltps.org
(609) 947-8738 (Emergency)

Alberto Rodriguez, Transportation Coordinator
(609) 671-5444
Customer service, Aide in Lieu

Bus Safety and Behavior Expectations

Riding the bus is a privilege and students are expected to abide by school rules and act in a safe manner at all times. Failure to do so will result in a discipline referral to the main office, and, in serious cases, may result in loss of bus transportation. In such cases, parents shall provide for transportation to and from school during the period of such exclusion.

We use **ABCD** to help students remember how to behave on the bus:

- **A**ssigned seat
- **B**uckle up
- **C**orrect sitting
- **D**river is in charge

Details about bus passes, pick up times, alternate pick-up/drop-off locations, and waivers can be found on the district's website.

Arrival and Dismissal

Receiving and dismissing approximately 375 students between the ages of 3 and 9 is a large task and one that requires the assistance of every teacher and staff member of Ben Franklin. Your cooperation in following our expectations for these times greatly aids us in providing a smooth, efficient, and safe arrival and dismissal for all students.

Arrival

- Students arriving between 8:15 am and 8:30 am proceed directly to the all purpose room.
- Students are released from the all purpose room at 8:30 am to go to classrooms. Students arriving between 8:30 am and 8:45 am report directly to classrooms.
- **Bus:** Our buses use the bus lane to drop off students. Staff members assist students as they enter through the front doors of the building.
- **Parent Drop Off:** Parents/guardians may walk their child to the front door of the building. Staff members meet students at the doors and help them proceed inside.
- **Car Riders:** Staff members assist in unloading students from cars. There is no need for parents/guardians to get out of cars. Students exit cars from the passenger side and enter the school through the side door. *Please read the specific Car Riders Safety First Directions below.*
- Students being dropped off after 8:45 am must be walked by a parent/guardian to the front entrance.
- When dropping off a student, refrain from using the bus lane as it creates a traffic and safety hazard for students.
- Do not park in drop off lanes or fire lane lanes.
- **Do not drive through the Bus Circle when Buses are present or between 8:00 - 10:00 AM and 3:00-4:00 PM.**

Dismissal

- **Bus:** Students riding buses are dismissed to the cafeteria where they sit in lines by bus. Attendance is taken to insure all bus riders are present. All changes are checked.
- **Parent/Guardian Pick Up:** Parents/guardians pick their children up at the Parent/Guardian Pick Up area which is the grassy area just outside the modulars. Staff assist students in this area. Parents/guardians need to sign students out at this location.
- **Car Riders:** Students are dismissed to the hallway leading to the side doors by the parking lot. Staff members assist students to the appropriate vehicles. *Please read the specific Car Riders Safety First Directions below.*
- **After School Programs:** Students attending an after school program (i.e. PTO club, Y Program, etc.) report to the gym where staff ensure they are accounted for by their program leaders.
- All Preschool and Kindergarten students are escorted by staff to these areas.

Car Riders Safety First Instructions

In an effort to maintain the safest possible environment for our students and families, please read and follow the guidelines below for drop off and pick up of students in the parking lot:

1. Please pull your car up as far as you can along the curb. Even if there is not a car directly behind you, chances are one will be soon. It is courteous, efficient, and safe to pull up as far as you can to allow the most amount of cars to line up along the sidewalk.
2. Please allow your child to exit from the PASSENGER SIDE of the car, directly onto the sidewalk. We make every effort to have a staff member directly assist children as they exit cars onto the sidewalk. It is very dangerous to exit on the driver's side and walk through traffic.
3. Please never pull around a car that is unloading. Often times the few seconds that may be saved, lead to stops in traffic that actually lose time and create dangerous situations in the parking lot. We are continually working to expedite the unloading process. Cars passing other cars actually creates situations that slow traffic down.
4. Please follow normal school and traffic laws.
 - a. Please obey the no left turn sign when turning onto Princeton Pike during drop off and pick up times.
 - b. Please refrain from using cell phones while driving.
 - c. Smoking on school grounds even in your car is prohibited.
5. Please refrain from parking and walking your child to the door. We fully understand how important it is to say goodbye in the morning, but parking and walking through the car traffic is dangerous for you, your child, and the other drivers.
6. If you have a question for a teacher in the morning, please write it in a note or call the office. During the morning arrival time, each teacher is on duty and has a very important responsibility in maintaining a safe environment.
7. Above all, please model cooperation, patience and teamwork for your child/children at all times in the parking lot.
8. During dismissal, place a paper with the name of your child(ren) on the dashboard

Changing Dismissal Plans

If your child's dismissal plan is different on a given day, please send in a written note with your child's name, the date, the change in dismissal plans, and your signature. A separate note must be sent each time your child's dismissal plan is different. In order to ensure the safety of your child, one note covering multiple days will not be accepted.

If you need to change dismissal plans during the day, please call the main office at 609-671-5540. The main office will inform the teacher of this change. While emailing the teacher is a great additional step, calling the main office is important since a teacher may not see your email in time for dismissal due to an absence or simply because s/he is working with your child. If your child attends an after school program, it is important to inform that program separately of any changes since they will be looking for your child if you do not inform them.

Main Office Pickup Before 3:00 pm Only

Please note that at 3:00 pm the main office begins preparations for dismissal. After 3:00 pm, students will not be dismissed from the main office. Families needing to pick up students from the main office may do so prior to 3:00 pm. After 3:00 pm, families may use the car rider pickup, parent/guardian pickup (aka walkers), or buses. We thank you in advance for your cooperation with this procedure to ensure the safe dismissal of all students.

Visiting Ben Franklin

- When visiting, please park in the large parking lot and walk to the Main Entrance. Parking is always at a premium. You may park on the side of the road.
- All Ben Franklin exterior doors remain locked during the school day. Entrance to the building can be obtained through the front doors only. Please ring the bell on the right side of the entranceway. When a secretary responds you may announce yourself, and she will release the door.
- All visitors need to sign in and out at the main office and enter and exit through the Main Entrance.
- All visitors will receive a name tag at the main office and must wear it while visiting Ben Franklin.
- Please do not go directly to the modular units.
- Do not enter the bus loop between 8 am and 8:45 am OR between 3 pm and 4 pm. These are the times that buses are arriving and/or picking up students and we need to maintain a safe environment for all students.
- Please refrain from parking or idling in the bus loop during the school day. This includes times even when you may just be dropping something off quickly.
- Please refrain from parking in the handicap parking spots in the bus lane unless you have the proper tags for your car.
- Please refrain from entering the building during arrival and dismissal times as the presence of any additional adults in the halls as this causes unnecessary distractions during a busy and important time of the day. Parents/guardians arriving at these times of day should report to the main office.

Student Discipline

Positive Behavior Supports

Responsive Classroom

The Responsive Classroom approach is a way of teaching that emphasizes social, emotional, and academic growth in a strong and safe school community. Developed by classroom teachers, the approach consists of practical strategies for helping students build academic and social-emotional competencies day in and day out. How students learn is as important as what they learn: Process and content go hand in hand. The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interaction. To be successful academically and socially, students need a set of social skills: cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control. At Ben Franklin, we place a strong emphasis on knowing the students we teach — individually, culturally, and developmentally — and partnering with their families for success. Some common practices seen in Responsive Classrooms include morning meeting, interactive modeling, positive teacher language, logical consequences, guided discovery, and academic choice.

Social Skill of the Month

Each year, students experience a variety of programs and activities related to the pillars of character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, citizenship as well as the social skill of the month. Ben Franklin focuses on a new social skill each month beginning with the Week of Respect in October.

Student Code of Conduct

The ultimate purpose of discipline is to help students learn to be responsible, productive contributors to society. Teachers and administrators endeavor to be firm, yet fair, while maintaining the dignity of the student. Schools are responsible for all students whether they are in the classroom, hallway, bus, cafeteria, or on the playground.

When a student breaks a rule, a school staff member will work to help the student see the connection between his/her actions and consequences, as well as between the act and the rule that was broken. Logical consequences are considered, along with the age level and developmental needs of the students, the history of the unacceptable behavior, and the circumstances of the offense. This is all part of the responsive classroom approach and each teacher will work with their students to understand logical consequences. Logical consequences include:

- **Take a break** - Student takes time to sit and reflect on behavior in order to regain self-control and make a positive plan for moving forward.
- **You break it; you fix it** - Student takes responsibility for fixing a problem s/he caused.
- **Loss of privilege** - Student temporarily loses a privilege after not meeting pre-established expectations.
- **Apology of action** - Student uses both actions and words to apologize.

Student discipline is progressive. Most misbehavior is addressed at the classroom level with teachers and staff. Student discipline may include a school administrator when misbehaviors continue beyond this or when the seriousness of a situation requires corrective action from a school administrator. Bus-related misbehavior is addressed by the bus driver initially. If needed, it is forwarded to school administrators.

The Lawrence Township Board of Education has adopted a Code of Student Conduct prescribing the rules and regulations for the control, discipline, suspension, and expulsion of students. These rules and regulations are intended to promote an atmosphere within the school, which is conducive to

learning as well as ensure the protection of the rights of students. Inherent to a democratic society is the fact that rights entail responsibilities. Self-respect and respect for others are major goals of the Code. Students have the right to avail themselves of a free public education. However, students have a responsibility not to interfere with the education of other students. An electronic copy of the discipline code is available on the district website at www.ltps.org. A hard copy is available in the main office.

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying

“Harassment, intimidation or bullying means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory (handicap) disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds... that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students and that:

- A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student’s property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his person or damage to his property;
- Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students, in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school;
- Creates a hostile educational environment at school for the student;
- Infringes on the rights of the student at school by interfering with a student’s education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.”

All formal reports of possible Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying must be first submitted to the building principal. The building principal determines if the report contains:

- Evidence of a violation of the Student Code of Conduct
- Evidence of a potential violation of the Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying policy

All situations where there is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct are addressed by the school regardless of whether or not it appears that there is a potential violation of the Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying policy. Consequences are determined by the acts committed, the age level and developmental needs of the students, the history of the unacceptable behavior, and the circumstances of the offense; **not** whether the incident is labeled as bullying or not.

If there is evidence of a potential violation of the Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying policy, the building principal will request that the school’s anti-bullying specialist start a formal investigation to determine if the situation is in violation of the Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying policy. The school will inform the families of students involved and the school’s anti-bullying specialist will begin the investigation.

Students who have witnessed or been victimized by harassment/bias statements/actions or bullying should report the incident immediately to a teacher, counselor, and/or an administrator. For detailed

information regarding procedures and guidelines related to district policy 5512 Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying please visit www.ltps.org.

If you would like to file a formal complaint regarding Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying, please contact Jay Billy at jbilly@ltps.org.

Ben Franklin Anti-Bullying Specialist: Destiny Cherry, dcherry@ltps.org

District Anti-Bullying Coordinator: Melanie Fillmyer, mfillmyer@ltps.org

Lunch, Recess, Snacks, and Foods in the Classrooms

Lunch and Recess Behavior Expectations

Students have lunch in our cafeteria and recess on the playground and blacktop area. During inclement weather, students may have indoor recess in the cafeteria. Please remember to make sure your child has appropriate, supportive footwear for playing during recess. Though there are staff members present who can assist students in opening lunch containers, it is best if you pack a lunch in containers that your child is able to open independently.

Students are expected to abide by school rules and act in a safe manner at all times. The following are acronyms we use for our expectations for recess and lunch:

PLAY

Play fair and safely
Look to include others
Always use equipment safely
You'll have fun!

EAT

Eat your food neatly
Always recycle and throw out trash
Talk quietly with friends

The teacher aides and teachers at lunch and recess make initial decisions if a student does not follow these expectations. The majority of these discipline issues are resolved at this level and are used as teaching opportunities for students. Teacher aides and teachers may determine that a student needs to speak with an administrator in the main office if a student repeatedly has difficulty following these expectations or if a specific situation warrants this level of attention.

Purchasing a School Lunch

****During the 2021-22 School Year ALL LUNCHES are Free**

Marybeth DiLorenzo, Director of Dining Services

mdilorenzo@ltps.org

(609) 671-5594

Students may bring a lunch from home or purchase a school lunch. A lunch menu will be sent home each month to assist you and your child in making lunch decisions.

We will not be using this during the 21-22 School Year

Lawrence Township schools participate in a program of electronic lunch payment – My School Bucks Point of Sale. You can pay for your child's lunches electronically. You can also check your child's current school meal account balances and monitor what items s/he purchases at school. A link to more information about the lunch program appears on the district website under the Parents dropdown menu. You can also go to <http://www.myschoolbucks.com/>

If you prefer, you may send cash or check to school for lunch payments. Please be sure that all money is in a sealed envelope clearly labeled with your child's name and the teacher's name.

Snacks and Food in the Classrooms

You may choose to pack a healthy snack and water for your child each day. Water will help us maintain a clean classroom environment. Snacks are eaten in classrooms and may be eaten in the morning for those with a late lunch and in the afternoon for those with an early lunch. Snack times are determined by each teacher. Please contact the teacher if your child has any special dietary concerns.

The Board of Education recognizes that child and adolescent obesity has reached epidemic levels in the United States and that poor diet combined with the lack of physical activity negatively impacts on students' health, and their ability and motivation to learn (LTBOE Operations Policy 8505.) The following items may not be served, sold or given out on school property at anytime before the end of the school day:

- Foods of minimal nutritional value (FMNV) as defined by U.S. Department of Agriculture regulations;
- All food and beverage items listing sugar, in any form, as the first ingredient;
- All forms of candy.

Games, Electronic Devices, & Cell Phones

Due to the risk of loss, damage and disruption to the learning environment the use of these items during the school day is strongly discouraged and students are responsible for their safe keeping. Students are encouraged to engage in social interactions with their peers during lunch, recess, and on the bus ride to and from school. If games and electronics are brought to school, students will be required to keep them off and in their backpacks during school instructional hours. Cell phones and other devices may not be used during school hours. If students bring devices and they become a distraction, they will be confiscated and returned to parents. Any cell phones or devices that are seen taking pictures/video of others will be confiscated.

Lost and Found

The Lost and Found is located in the front entrance of the school. It is helpful to label all of your child's belongings on the inside with his/her first and last name if possible. Items found with a student's name on it can easily be returned directly to the student in his/her classroom.

If your child loses an item, please check here for it. You can either check for it here yourself one day or send a note or email to your classroom teacher requesting that your child check the Lost and Found. It sometimes takes a day or two for a lost item to turn up at the Lost and Found. So it is helpful to check back once or twice. The school does clean out the Lost and Found a few times during the year and often announces this before doing so to give families the opportunity to check for lost items one last time.

Health Office

Mrs. Cynthia Brennan, RN, CSN
(609) 671-5540, Option 3 (phone)
cbrennan@ltps.org

EMERGENCY CARE FORM

The main purpose of the emergency care form is to help us to locate the parent in the event of illness or emergency involving your child. Hospitals and private doctors will not give emergency medication or treatment or perform any kind of surgery except when the parent or guardian is present. It is very important that we be able to locate you at any time. Please list phone numbers of neighbors who will know where you are for emergency calls and who may pick up your child when he/she feels ill and you are not at home. In special cases, you may wish to call and give the school secretary a number where you can be reached for the day.

SCHOOL NURSE

A full time nurse is assigned to each of our schools. Students requiring first aid or medication will be

handled by the nurse. No medication can be taken by a child without having been dispensed by the nurse. Children should stay home if they are sick.

In addition to providing medical care, the nurse provides screenings as required by NJAC 6A:16 which may include hearing, vision, height, and weight, blood pressure and scoliosis. The school nurse would be happy to talk to you concerning any specific medical or physical problems experienced by your child.

Exclusions From School

Below is a list of most commonly seen illnesses and the exclusion time from school. These exclusions are an effort to control the spread of communicable disease in the classroom. It is understood that balancing work responsibilities with the care of an ill child can be difficult. Many children return to school sick because they are anxious to return or fear missing a special event. It is important to remember that children sent back to school, before they are recovered from an illness for whatever reason, may still be contagious and able to infect others. Children who are not feeling well have difficulty performing well in school.

Look for specific COVID 19 Protocols for exclusion and quarantine.

Not sharing germs by staying home when you are sick is the best way to prevent the spread of illness.

If your child exhibits the following illnesses please adhere to the below procedures for remaining home:

Fever

Any child with a temperature of **100 degrees** or more is excluded from school. Children must be fever-free (*temperature below 100 degrees*) **for a full 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine**, BEFORE returning to school. Children's temperatures do not remain constant throughout the day. It is important to check your child's temperature a few times throughout the day. Not just in the morning or at night, to be certain they have completely recovered from their illness.

VOMITING AND/OR DIARRHEA

Children with stomach viruses often do not have a fever. It is difficult to know whether a child's vomiting or diarrhea is caused by virus, something they ate or some other reason; therefore, any child who vomits or has diarrhea is excluded from school. Children who vomit or have diarrhea must remain home until they **have not vomited or had diarrhea for a full 24 hours**. Children should be **tolerating regular meals** without discomfort.

COUGH

Children who are **coughing continuously** should remain home if; the cough is such that it interferes with their ability **OR** the ability of others to concentrate on school work, **even if they are fever-free**. **Written permission from the parent/guardian** is required in order for children to have COUGH DROPS in school. Because of the potential for choking, students are required to come to the Health Office to have their cough drops.

STREP THROAT

Children diagnosed with **strep throat** must be on **antibiotic therapy for a full 24 hours** before returning to school. They must also be **fever-free for a full 24 hours** before returning to school.

PINK EYE

Children diagnosed with **bacterial conjunctivitis** must be on **antibiotic therapy for a full 24 hours and**

have no purulent discharge from the eye(s) before returning to school.

INFLUENZA-LIKE ILLNESS (ILI)

Children with a fever, cough, and/or sore throat are considered to have **ILI**. Children with ILI should stay home and not go into the community (except to seek medical care) for **AT LEAST 24 HOURS after being fever free without the use of fever-reducing medicine**.

CHICKEN POX

Children diagnosed with Chicken Pox may return to school when exposed scabs are dry.

Infectious Skin Conditions

Student must be on prescribed medical treatment for 24 hours prior to returning to school. For open and/or draining lesions, exposed areas of skin must remain covered while in school.

Diabetes

Diabetes is a serious chronic disease and must be managed 24 hours a day. Students with diabetes will work with the school nurse to develop a health plan. For more information see Board Policy 5338

Allergies in School

Students with severe allergies may be at risk for anaphylaxis, a sudden and severe reaction that can involve various areas of the body. Please see Policy 5331, which has been developed in accordance with the guidelines for the management of life threatening allergies in schools developed by the NJ Department of Education. The roles and responsibilities for managing allergies are outlined in Regulation 5331 D. Parents should inform their school nurse of any concerns they have about severe allergies and the management of the allergy in school.

Exclusions from school for non- illness

Lice

Pediculosis capitis is an infestation of the hair on the scalp. The gold standard for diagnosing head lice is finding a live louse on the head. Students will be sent home if the school nurse determines that the student has lice. Students would be allowed to return to school after proper treatment with an anti-pediculosis shampoo and rechecked by the school nurse. If the child continues to show evidence of live lice infestation, he/she will be excluded until the signs dissipate. If the nurse determines no live lice upon return to school s/he may return to class. If a student returns to school with nits only s/he will return to class. Please contact your school nurse for more information.

Medications

Medications During School Hours:

Whenever possible, the parent/guardian should arrange with their physician for medication to be given outside of school hours. If, however, their physician deems it necessary for the student to take medication during school hours, there are specific procedures to follow. **These procedures are to be followed for all medications, including over-the-counter or short-term medications such as antibiotics or cough medicine.** (Medication forms are online-at our district website). New doctors' orders are required at the start of each school year.

1. The physician must complete and sign one of the three District forms:
 - a. Asthma Action Plan- Students who have asthma and use an inhaler or nebulizer.
 - b. Allergic Reaction Action Plan- Students who have food or other allergies and require emergency medication.

- c. Request for Administration of Medication- Any other medication required during school hours.
2. The parent/guardian must sign the medication form and return it to the nurse.
3. Children in Pre-Kindergarten through sixth grade are not allowed to carry or self-administer medication.
4. **Asthma Inhalers and Epi-Pens ONLY – Permission to Self- Administer Medication (Grade 7-12)**
 - a. The physician and parent must sign that the student is capable of self-administering their medication.
 - b. The student must demonstrate to the school nurse that they have proper knowledge and use of their medication.
 - c. Please call your school nurse to review the District’s policy regarding under what circumstances students are permitted to self-administer medication during school sponsored events.
5. For the safety of all students, medications must be hand delivered to the school nurse by the parent/guardian in the original pharmacy labeled container.
 - a. When getting the prescription filled, ask the pharmacist to provide an extra labeled container for school.
6. **Asthma Medication via NEBULIZERS:**
 - a. In addition to the medication, the parent needs to also provide a mask, chamber & tubing that will remain in the Health Office.
7. **The prescribing physician must provide written orders if there is a change in the original order. New orders are required in September even if a change order was received during the school year. New orders are needed every September.**

Medications On Field Trips:

- School law forbids teachers from administering medication in school and also on school sponsored trips. This can create problems due to the shortage of qualified substitute nurses available to accompany students on a field trip in order to administer medication. We are committed to meeting the health needs of each student, but we must also consider the health and safety needs of all the students remaining in the school building. Consequently, we would appreciate your cooperation. If your child will require medication on a field trip, please review the following option regarding field trips:
- Parent/Guardian may accompany the student and give the needed medication.
- Adjust the time for daily medication to be given, i.e., before the trip, after the trip as the student’s doctor requires. (Not Asthma medication or Epi-Pens)
- If the student has asthma and cannot self-administer his/her own medication, a parent/guardian or nurse will need to accompany the student.
- If the student has a life threatening allergy that requires emergency medication, a parent/guardian, nurse or District employee trained as a designee must accompany the student.
- **Please call the school nurse several weeks before a scheduled trip if you need to make special arrangements for your child**

State ordered face coverings

Masks

- It is mandatory to wear a mask on school grounds and on the bus at all times unless doing so would inhibit the student's health (No Gaiters or masks with valves or vents).
- Students not wearing a mask will not be allowed to enter or stay in the building unless they have the appropriate doctor's note to exempt them from mask wearing .
- Appropriate accommodations will be made in the event that a student cannot wear a face mask.
- Students must provide their own mask and wear it to school everyday. Masks should be washed at the end of each day.
- Masks may not display inappropriate messages or images or content offensive to others. For example: alcohol, language, symbols, drugs, etc.
- It is recommended that students bring an extra mask with them to school in the event that their mask breaks, is damaged, or becomes wet.

School Counseling/Guidance Office

Ms. Destiny Cherry
decherry@ltps.org

A school counselor serves in many different roles but the primary role is that of a support for students. Through class, small group, and individual interactions with students, the school counselor at Ben Franklin facilitates personal, social, and intellectual growth. Ms. Cherry helps students develop decision-making skills, adjust to new experiences, and understand their personal abilities to support the enhancement of students' educational experiences. She also serves as a support to teachers to provide insights on special needs of students.

Ms. Cherry also serves as resources to parents and families to ensure every student experiences academic as well as social and emotional growth. Parents should feel free to contact her when they feel their child needs a safe place to go to express his/her thoughts, feelings, and concerns.

Ms. Cherry also works closely with LIS school counselors to provide a smooth transition for students as they move on to LIS in fourth grade.

Academic Program

Language Arts

Literacy at Ben Franklin supports students as they learn to read and write with increasing skill and fluency. Students enjoy showcasing their literary knowledge through discussions with peers and teachers during whole-class direct instruction, individual conferences, and small group instruction. The standards-based curriculum focuses on reading and analyzing literature and informational text, writing, foundational skills, and speaking and listening. Daily instruction is organized in a workshop structure where students engage in authentic reading and writing while the teachers take on the role of mentors and coaches. Additionally, teachers engage students in interactive read alouds, shared reading, guided reading, and interactive writing, during which students are exposed to both complex text and books that correlate with their independent and instructional levels.

Mathematics

Mathematics at Ben Franklin focuses on building connections between number concepts, geometric relationships and a range of problem solving skills. Beyond the ability to calculate, students learn to apply their mathematical skills and knowledge to measurement and data analysis tasks. Students learn to make sense of mathematics and communicate their understanding to others. Daily instruction is organized using a variety of structures to maximize differentiation to meet the learning needs of all students.

Science

Students are provided with a variety of opportunities to think and work as scientists throughout the year with a focus on fostering curiosity and wonder, inquiry and discovery, and a passion for learning and understanding. Students engage with hands-on explorations and activities with authentic built-in problem-solving and inquiry across the life, physical, and earth sciences. They also have opportunities to apply their mathematical, reading, and writing skills within this context.

Social Studies

Our social studies program introduces the world to our students as they build a foundation for a global future. Self-awareness, awareness of the world and its people, a sense of time and place, and the skills required to form positive relationships with those around them are what comprises the primary social studies program. Our goal is for students to develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world. This area includes curricular studies in social justice, race and identity.

Related Arts

Ben Franklin seeks to provide students with a wide variety of educational opportunities. Students receive health and physical education, art, music, and library. Students attend these classes each week.

Homework

Every child should try to get in at least 20 minutes of reading each evening in addition to other work. If children find books they like, no matter what the level, let them read or read with them whenever possible.

1. Homework should be relevant to classroom activities and student goals.
2. All students should be encouraged to read and write outside of school in their free time. However, since a goal of our workshop model is to create lifelong readers and writers, any reading assigned as homework should apply skills and strategies taught in school.
3. The amount of daily assigned homework should not exceed the grade level times ten minutes, on average. For example, in third grade, it would be $3 \times 10 = 30$ minutes.
4. Teachers may or may not assign homework on a given night.
5. Weekend and holiday homework assignments should be avoided whenever possible. Homework should not be given on religious or cultural holidays as listed on the Board approved calendar.
6. Parents who want additional homework for their children beyond these guidelines may supplement school assignments on their own.

English as a Second Language

English as a Second Language is available to K-12 students who are learning to speak and understand English. Students in ESL develop academic language abilities that allow them to successfully participate in instruction in the general classroom. Students may spend less than one full year or up to 3-4 years in ESL, depending on need. <https://www.ltps.org/Page/980>

Academic Support Services

Language arts and mathematics support provide modifications and support for students who need assistance in math and/or language arts. Students are identified through standards aligned assessments. Support teachers may provide instruction in the classroom or outside of the classroom, depending on what will best serve a student's needs. These services are designed to be flexible in that students will receive support and strategies that enable them to follow the instructions of their classroom teacher without additional teacher support. The clear purpose of this support is to exit students at grade level proficiency in those content areas. Students' learning achievement is reviewed regularly, and students may enter or exit the program at any time during the school year, based on need. <https://www.ltps.org/Page/977>

Gifted and Talented

Lawrence Township Public Schools believes that every child possesses special gifts and talents, and it is our mission to provide our students with a variety of learning experiences that cultivate their gifts and talents. These unique learning experiences can vary in nature and are delivered using multiple instructional strategies including differentiated instruction, cluster grouping, enrichment programs, curriculum compacting, accelerated learning, independent study and honors/AP courses.

General education teachers and G&T teachers work collaboratively to enhance the existing curriculum, provide additional explorations and offer opportunities for enrichment to students in grades K-8. With each increasing grade level cluster, additional services and options are added. <https://www.ltps.org/Page/976>

Intervention and Referral Services

Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) are designed to assist students who are experiencing learning, behavior, or health difficulties and to assist staff in addressing these needs. The I&RS team meets regularly throughout the year to partner with teachers and families to address these concerns within the general education program with an emphasis on early identification and intervention. If a student's classroom teacher plans to meet with the I&RS team, s/he communicates this with a student's parents. Parents are invited to attend when appropriate.

Student Services

Our elementary schools provide comprehensive special education support for students beginning in preschool. We provide a continuum of services that seek to meet the needs of each student. Our child study teams consist of a school social worker, school psychologist, learning disabilities-teacher consultant, and behaviorist. Speech therapists and occupational therapists provide support to those students who may need services in those areas. Student Services also provides extensive professional development for staff and parent training opportunities to solicit the support of all people that impact the lives of students.

Parent Communication

The best educational results happen when parents and teachers work together to plan for and discuss a student's educational needs. We encourage frequent communication between parents and teachers.

Email and Voicemail

All Lawrence Township Public Schools teaching staff members have an email account and may be contacted this way. In most, though not all, cases the staff member's email address is the first letter of the staff member's first name and the complete last name followed by @ltps.org. All teaching staff members also have voicemail and may be reached via voicemail as well. Please remember when contacting teachers that the majority of their day is spent working directly with students. As such, it may take a day to reply.

Report Cards and Conferences

Report cards and Teacher Conferences are used to communicate student progress with families on a quarterly basis. Report cards are distributed three times a year. Parent-Teacher Conferences are held in the fall and spring.

PTO

The Ben Franklin Parent-Teacher Organization (BF PTO) strives to work as a positive team that supports teachers, parents and, most of all, our students. Without your help we just cannot meet our goals. Your support of fundraisers, your commitment of time, and your donation of talents all come together to make a great year for all students. It is our goal to have every Ben Franklin family join the PTO and participate in our fabulous activities. Information about the BF PTO is sent home at the beginning of the school year and can also be found at <http://www.bfpto.org/>. The PTO also has a facebook page you can follow at <https://www.facebook.com/BFLawrNj/?fref=nf>.

PTO 2021- 2022 Executive Board

Bonne Giglio	President
Sandy Cayo	1st Vice President
Donna Erichsen	2nd Vice President
Nicole Bottrel	Secretary
Kate Schumacher	Treasurer

Student Safety

Fire Drills and Security Drills

Lawrence Township Public Schools has developed plans to deal with a variety of emergency situations. Fire drills will be conducted at least one (1) time per month. Security drills will be conducted at least one (1) time per month during the school year. Security drills are three different types: Evacuation, Intruder Lock-Down, Shelter-in-place Lockdown. No one is permitted to enter the school during a drill. If you arrive at Ben Franklin during a drill, please wait outside until the drill is complete. Students, teachers, staff, and visitors are expected to take these drills seriously.

Affirmative Action

Sean Fry
Affirmative Action Coordinator
sfry@ltps.org

As per Board policy 2260, Lawrence Township Public Schools do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, mental or physical handicap, socio-economic status,

sexual orientation, age or sex in any of its policies or regulations related to admissions, employment, financial aid, educational service, programs, or activities.

Electronic Surveillance Equipment

The Lawrence Board of Education has installed an electronic surveillance system in all of our schools to ensure school safety for our students. At Lawrenceville Elementary School, we will be using this electronic surveillance equipment to monitor the security of our building, school community, and school grounds.

Board of Education Policies

The information provided in parts of our handbook is based on the Board of Education's policies and regulations. Policies and Regulations may be viewed in their entirety on the Lawrence Township Public School's website, www.ltps.org under Board of Ed tab/Board Policies. Board policies will be referenced throughout the handbook.

Policies can be located by selecting the "Board of Ed" tab and select "Board Policies" on the drop down menu. Policies are listed numerically in folders on the website. For those who do not have access to a computer, copies of the policies are available in the main office.